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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/888,907	06/25/2001	Gregory H. Scott	KEJR.84164	1191

7590 12/20/2002

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EXAMINER

NOLAND, THOMAS

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2856

DATE MAILED: 12/20/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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2

DATE MAILED:

This is a communication from the examiner in charge of your application.
COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS

This application has been examined Responsive to communication filed on 6/25/77 This action is made final.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 1 month(s), — days from the date of this letter.
Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. 35 U.S.C. 133

Part I THE FOLLOWING ATTACHMENT(S) ARE PART OF THIS ACTION:

1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited by Examiner, PTO-892.	2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsman's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.
3. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Art Cited by Applicant, PTO-1449.	4. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152.
5. <input type="checkbox"/> Information on How to Effect Drawing Changes, PTO-1474.	6. <input type="checkbox"/>

Part II SUMMARY OF ACTION

1. Claims 1-17 are pending in the application.

Of the above, claims _____ are withdrawn from consideration.

2. Claims _____ have been cancelled.

3. Claims _____ are allowed.

4. Claims _____ are rejected.

5. Claims _____ are objected to.

6. Claims 1-17 are subject to restriction or election requirement.

7. This application has been filed with informal drawings under 37 C.F.R. 1.85 which are acceptable for examination purposes.

8. Formal drawings are required in response to this Office action:

9. The corrected or substitute drawings have been received on _____. Under 37 C.F.R. 1.84 these drawings are acceptable; not acceptable (see explanation or Notice of Draftsman's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948).

10. The proposed additional or substitute sheet(s) of drawings, filed on _____, has (have) been approved by the examiner; disapproved by the examiner (see explanation).

11. The proposed drawing correction, filed _____, has been approved; disapproved (see explanation).

12. Acknowledgement is made of the claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. 119. The certified copy has been received not been received been filed in parent application, serial no. _____; filed on _____.

13. Since this application appears to be in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under Ex parte Quayle, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

14. Other

EXAMINER'S ACTION

Art Unit: 2852

1. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

2. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-5, drawn to a soil sampler liner, classified in class 73, subclass 864.91.
- II. Claim 16, drawn to a method of obtaining a soil sample, classified in class 175, subclass 58.
- III. Claim 17, drawn to a method of packaging soil samples liners, classified in class 53, subclass 475.

3. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because:

Inventions Group 2 and Group 1 are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process such as one where the

Art Unit: 2852

reduced areas are not used to facilitate cutting but to allow easier injection of a treating chemical, etc.

4. Inventions Group 1 and Group 3 are related as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product (MPEP § 806.05(h)). In the instant case the product as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process such as functioning as a liner without being combined with a plurality compressed into a container as in Group 3.

5. Inventions Group 2 and Group 3 are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention Group 2 has separate utility such as use as a sample liner without necessarily being retrieved from a liner container made as in group

3. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

6. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

7. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group 1 is not required for Groups 2-3, etc., restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Art Unit: 2852

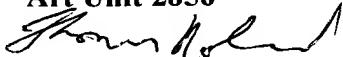
8. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tom Noland whose telephone number is (703) 305-4765. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays from 9:00 to 5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Hezron E. Williams, can be reached on (703) 305-4705.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 308-7722.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

12/16/02
Thomas P. Noland
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2856


T NOLAND/pj
12/16/02